

Media Interviews and Events  
This Month by  
Ambassador McEldowney



# U.S. EMBASSY SOFIA

## E-Newsletter for July 2009



On July 30, Ambassador Nancy McEldowney departed post for her new assignment to Washington, as the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State in the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs. For the first week of August, the Deputy Chief of Mission Susan Sutton will act as the Charge d'Affaires until August 7 when Ambassador John Ordway will assume duties of the Charge. We expect it may take several months before the new

Ambassador to Bulgaria arrives. Until then, the leadership and staff of the embassy will continue working in support of the strong and vibrant U.S.-Bulgaria Strategic Partnership that spans countless projects and programs throughout Bulgaria.



### Ambassador McEldowney's Departure Statement to the Press July 30, 2009

The relationship between Bulgaria and the United States is better than ever before. Today our strategic partnership encompasses every issue of importance to our governments and our people. From defense collaboration and reform to increased trade and energy security to educational exchanges and joint promotion of democratic principles and rule of law, we stand together as allies and friends.

During my tenure as American Ambassador to Bulgaria, it has been a great privilege to contribute to this partnership. With new governments now in place in both Washington and Sofia, we are well positioned to accelerate and intensify our cooperation and I am confident this will occur in the weeks and months ahead.

I depart Bulgaria deeply gratified by the progress we have achieved together and filled with optimism for the future. I will never forget the warmth, the hospitality, and the true friendship that my family and I encountered throughout this beautiful country. And I know that our common struggle to make the right things happen for and between our countries will lead to ever greater accomplishments.



### Ambassador McEldowney Bids Farewell to Bulgaria

Surrounded by friends and colleagues from both the U.S. and Bulgaria, Ambassador McEldowney bid a fond farewell to Bulgaria as she and her family departed for her new assignment in Washington.





## In the News

### Ambassador Interviewed for “Panorama” TV show

On Friday July 24, Boyko Vassilev interviewed Ambassador McEldowney for the popular Friday evening TV show “Panorama”. The Ambassador reaffirmed the U.S. commitment to Bulgaria, and she highlighted a wide variety of programs and projects where the U.S. and Bulgaria have a common interest, such as our close defense partnership, the numerous U.S. businesses in Bulgaria working on energy and information technology, and schools such as American University of Blagoevgrad and American College of Sofia, all examples of our longstanding close relationship. Ambassador McEldowney referenced a Bulgarian proverb, “The morning foretells the day”, to illustrate that the future looks good for Bulgaria, and for an ambitious agenda for our bilateral partnership.



### Ambassador Receives Bulgaria’s Highest Distinction



In a formal ceremony witnessed by dignitaries and senior staff members from both the U.S. Embassy and the President’s office, President Georgi Parvanov bestowed on Ambassador McEldowney the Order of the Stara Planina (Balkan Range), First Class, in recognition for the strong bilateral relationship and high level of dialogue between the two countries over the past year. Ambassador McEldowney congratulated her Bulgarian and American staff present at the ceremony, and thanked them all for their dedication of service, pointing out that they represent the continuity when she leaves.

### Ambassador McEldowney Presents New PM Congratulatory Letter from President Obama

Following a meeting with the new Prime Minister Boyko Borissov, Ambassador McEldowney presented the Prime Minister with a letter from President Obama that congratulated PM Borissov on his election victory, and expressed commitment from the U.S. to our partnership with Bulgaria. In her brief remarks, Ambassador McEldowney said she was pleased that her last official act prior to her departure was a call on the Prime Minister, and underscored that President Obama was determined to continue forward with our strong partnership. The Prime Minister thanked the Ambassador for her kind remarks, congratulated her on her DC appointment, and expressed hoped she could be Bulgaria’s ambassador to the State Department.



### Ambassador Receives Award from Minister of Defense

On July 20 in a special ceremony at the Grand Hall of the Defense Ministry, Minister Tsonev bestowed upon Ambassador McEldowney the honorary decoration St. George 1st Class, an award that symbolizes the ambassador’s personal commitment towards maintaining strong bilateral military relations during her tenure in Bulgaria. The Ambassador thanked Minister Tsonev for everything he has done to strengthen this partnership, and gave her heartfelt gratitude to the men and women of our armed services who stand in the front lines of defense for all of us.





## In the News

### Y.E.S. Students on the Way to the U.S.

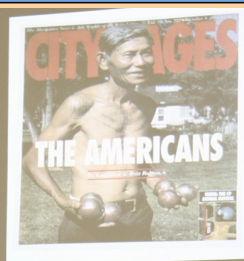


On July 13, Ambassador McElDowney met with and welcomed seven Bulgarian high school student who will participate in the Youth Exchange and Study (YES) program that is funded by the State Department. This is the first year that Bulgaria is participating in this program, and these students were selected out of over 450 students who applied for this program. All the students will receive a grant to study in high school for one school year in the U.S., and most will attend U.S. public high schools.

### Semester at Sea Students Visit Special Needs Children



For one weekend in July, the school ship "EXPLORER" brought over 700 U.S. university students to Varna as part of their summer semester at sea. The Virginia-based ship circumnavigates the globe each year, and made Bulgaria part of its summer program. While in port, several of the students visited children at "Karin Dom" where special needs children attend courses in academics and life experiences from experts and volunteers. The children performed several musical selections for the SAS visitors who in-turn sang songs typical of their American childhood.



### American Photographer Reveals Different Look at American Life

Award winning American photographer Wing Young Huie gave lectures and presentations throughout Bulgaria of his photography which depicts the complex, social, ethnic and cultural realities of American society. Huie, who is in Bulgaria as a Fulbright Senior Specialist, captivated audiences of all ages with his unique style and creative narrative that weaved a story that made his photos come to life. Huie's visit in Bulgaria is a part of the student project "Student Lens 2009: Show Them Your World!" [www.eustudies.eu](http://www.eustudies.eu).

More information on the artist can be found online at: <http://www.wingyounghuie.com>

### Army Brass Band Performs Concert in Sofia

To celebrate the 233rd Anniversary of the signing of the American Declaration of Independence, a brass quintet from the United States Army Europe Band gave a free lunch-time concert on July 2nd in front of the National Theatre "Ivan Vazov." The quintet, stationed in Heidelberg, Germany, play lively music such as jazz and marches to celebrate the American holiday. More than 150 people enjoyed the music as they strolled downtown Sofia at this historic theater.





## In the Spotlight

### Peace Corps Volunteers Sworn In at Special Ceremony in Vratsa

In a ceremony led by Lesley Duncan, Peace Corps Director, Deputy Chief of Mission Susan Sutton administered the Volunteer Oath to sixty-two new Volunteers at a ceremony in Vratsa. This group will be serving in Bulgaria for the next twenty-four months in education, youth and community development projects, developed with the active collaboration and participation of numerous Bulgarian organizations. The ceremony was attended by dignitaries from the municipality and other parts of Bulgaria. But most important, the new host families who will take care of the new volunteers were on-hand to witness this event and to welcome their new "family" members.



**New Peace Corps  
Volunteers Take the  
Oath from DCM Sutton  
to work and  
serve in  
Bulgaria**



**Task Force East Hosts  
Local Mayors to  
the Novo Selo  
Training Area**



**U.S. Artists Performed to  
Appreciative Crowds at  
July Jazz Fest in Smolyan**



**Please Note: The U.S. Embassy will be closed on Monday September 7 due to the U.S. Labor Day Holiday**

#### Upcoming Events:

August 12 at 19:30 pm— Irving Louis Lattin Bluse Band will perform on the Stage "Nikola Vapzarov" Square, Bansko

August 13 at 19:30 pm— Jamie Davis performs with the Bulgarian National Radio Big Band on the Stage "Nikola Vapzarov" Square, Bansko

September 4 — Ari Roland Quartet plays at Apollonia Festival in Sozopol.

#### Embassy of the United States of America

16, Kozyak Street, Sofia 1407, Bulgaria

Telephone: +359 2 937 5100

Fax number: +359 2 937 5320

<http://bulgaria.usembassy.gov>

General E-mail Box: [sofia@usembassy.bg](mailto:sofia@usembassy.bg)

If you wish to receive the newsletter via e-mail, please fill in our [subscription form](#).